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ABSTRACT

The literature on collective bargaining in public education typically argues whether such bargaining is good public policy or bad, sound or unsound, and so forth. No studies to date have measured the actual impact of differing kinds of collective bargaining legislation on local school boards' decisionmaking powers. This study examined whether two factors--(1) public sector collective bargaining enabling legislation (defined as varying permutations of mediation and binding arbitration) and (2) district size--result in differing levels of restriction on board policymaking in collective bargaining agreements. The data source was comprised of adopted 1984 budgets and collective bargaining agreements from a random sample of school districts in Wisconsin, Michigan, and Illinois. The results suggest that district size has a greater impact on various economic and policymaking duties of school boards than does external pressure to avoid impasse. As district size increases, so do restrictions on board capability to carry out duties unilaterally. Boards in the state with the most pressure (compulsory binding arbitration) devoted more money to teacher salaries. The impact did not, however, occur in noneconomic, policymaking duties. Nine figures and six tables are included. (IW)

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The Impact of Three Types of Collective Bargaining Statutes and District Size On the Ability of Boards of Education To Execute Their Legislatively Mandated Duties

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Running Head: THE IMPACT OF LEGISLATION AND DISTRICT SIZE ON COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENTS

AERA Convention
April 1986

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The Impact of Three Types of Collective Bargaining Statutes and District Size On the Ability of Boards of Education To Execute Their Legislatively Mandated Duties

Abstract

This research examined the impact of the external pressure to avoid impasse in negotiations that is contained in collective bargaining enabling legislation (defined as varying permutations of mediation and binding arbitration) and district size on the ability of boards of education to carry out their legislatively mandated duties. Adopted 1984 budgets and collective bargaining agreements from a random sample of school districts in three states comprised the data source. The results suggest that district size has a greater impact on various economic and policy-making duties of school boards than external pressure to avoid impasse. Nevertheless, boards in the state with the most presssure (compulsory binding arbitration) were found, indeed, to devote more money to teacher salaries that would likely be the case if the requirement did not exist. The impact, however, did not occur in non-economic, policy-making duties.

The Impact of Three Types of Collective Bargaining Statutes and District Size On the Ability of Boards of Education To Execute Their Legislatively Mandated Duties

Objectives of the Research

Approximately 40 states have enacted enabling legislation or established administrative rulings requiring or permitting public sector collective bargaining. It naturally follows that differences will exist among the various states' implementation of the practice. Because collective bargaining agreements always transfer power from the employer to the employees by placing limits on the discretion of the former to act unilaterally, and because employees in the public sector have no common-law right to strike, procedures for the resolution of impasse when the normal course of negotiations fails to result in an agreement are extremely important. These can vary from compulsory binding arbitration, which exerts direct and strong external third-party pressure to settle short of impasse, to mediation and/or fact-finding without arbitration, which provides only such external pressure as may result from the parties' public image, to no provisions at all for resolution of impasse.

At the same time, size of organization is well

known to have an impact on a range of organizational characteristics (Tyack and Callahan 1962), many of which directly overlap topics that employees typically desire to have addressed in collective bargaining agreements. This research examined whether these two factors, the amount of discretion that public sector collective bargaining enabling legislation retains in the hands of boards of education in the event of bargaining impasse, and district size results in differing levels of restriction on board policy-making in collective bargaining agreements.

Theoretical Framework

The literature on collective bargaining in public elementary and secondary education contains not a single study which measures the actual impact of differing kinds of collective legislation on local school boards' decision-making powers. Most typically, writers on the subject argue whether collective bargaining in education is good public policy or bad (Boulding 1975), theoretically sound or unsound (Wellington and Winter 1969 and 1971), or impedes or contributes to efficient management of the schools (Cresswell and Murphy 1980,

and Leiberman 1980) depending on their personal predisposition toward labor or management. Studies attempting to determine whether collective bargaining has had positive, negative, or no impact on salaries (Chambers 1977, Hall and Carroll 1973, and Zuelke and Frohreich 1977), are the closest approximations to empirical, non value-driven research that has been done on the effects of collective bargaining in education. Here, provisions of collective bargaining agreements that limited board discretion to manage the district unilaterally were considered as the products of the different political environments created by the enabling legislation or administrative rulings. Where strong external pressure to agree to employee proposals occurs, limitations on a range of employer decision-making should appear in the resulting agreements, either directly as a result of arbitration awards, or indirectly, as boards "voluntarily" agree even to proposals not to their liking because of the probability that if the matters were bargained to impasse, an arbitrator would eventually grant them. Where the external pressure is weak or non-existent, provisions of

the bargained agreements should contain very little restriction on boards' capability to act unilaterally in making policy for the management of the school district simply because boards of education are not likely, of their own volition, to agree to proposals that limit their capability to execute their legislative duties.

Additionally, district size, well-known to be a surrogate measure of organizational complexity and bureaucratization, each of which severely limits the capability of the organization to act swiftly and unilaterally, should have an independent impact on contract language. Generally, as size increases, so also should limits on board discretion. A twofold rationale justifies this prediction: (a) The resulting organizational "distance" between employer boards and their employees creates a need for organized and impersonal communication and control systems, and (b) Increases in the number of employees provide the necessary critical mass of potential members necessary for a local employee unit to fund the development of

sophisticated and professionalized collective bargaining personnel and to exert power at the bargaining table through the threat to withhold services, whether legally sanctioned or not.

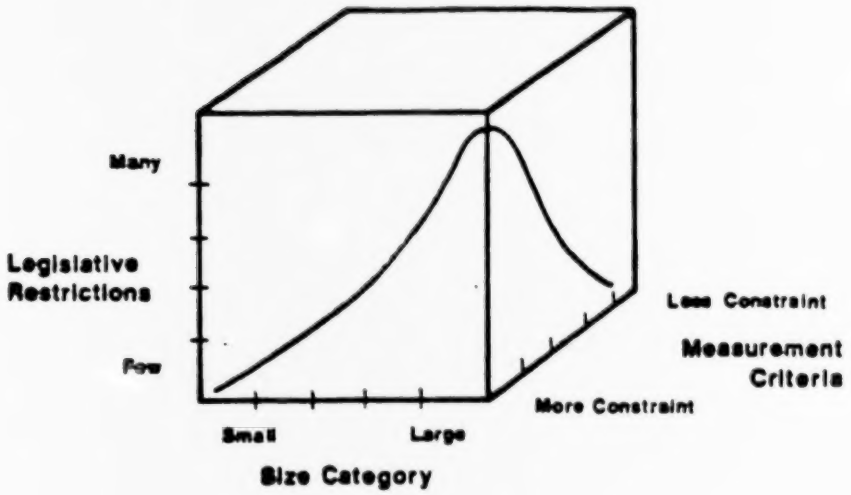
Hypotheses

A model for examining the independent and interactive effects of legislation and district size on board policy-making prerogatives was developed. Essentially it predicts that as external pressure on the employer to agree to employee proposals at time of impasse increases, and as district size increases, so also will contract language limiting the unilateral discretion of local school boards to manage the schools. Further, the interaction between external pressure and size is predicted to result in more constraints than either of the two operating alone. Figure 1 presents the model in schematic form.

INSERT FIGURE 1 ABOUT HERE

FIGURE 1

A Conceptual Model of Bargaining Legislative Restrictions and Size on Various Measurement Criteria



The model leads to the following specific hypotheses:

(a) As collective bargaining legislation provides increasing external pressure to avoid bargaining impasse, contract language restricting the boards' discretion to execute their legislatively prescribed duties unilaterally will increase;

(b) As school district size increases, contract language restricting the boards' discretion to execute their legislatively prescribed duties unilaterally will increase;

(c) As external pressure to avoid bargaining impasse and district size simultaneously increase, more contract language restricting the board's discretion to execute their legislatively prescribed duties unilaterally will occur than when either of the two conditions appear alone.

Methods and/or Techniques

Three states, Wisconsin, Michigan, and Illinois, were identified as having three sharply different levels of external pressure for impasse resolution in their enabling legislation. Wisconsin was deemed to have

strong external pressure because its legislation requires bargaining and, in the event of impasse, requires compulsory binding arbitration with the arbitrator being limited to awarding the the last best offer of either party. Michigan, which requires bargaining and provides for mediation but does not require either party to accept a mediated solution was considered to have moderate external pressure. Illinois, where legislation at the time of the research permitted but did not require collective bargaining, and which had no imposed impasse resolution procedure, was classified as having weak pressure. Each state has school districts of varying sizes, from very large to very small.

Thirteen legislatively mandated duties common to all school school districts were formulated into the dependent variables. Budget allocations and contract language provisions that would provide operational indication of the presence (including degree where applicable) or absence of restriction on each were developed and refined on a pilot sample. Eight of the thirteen were non-dichotomous and five were dichotomous.

Four (numbers 1, 4, 9, and 12, were classified as economic variables because they have an immediate, visible impact on a district's budget. The remaining nine, which limit administrator (school board) discretion, were classified as policy-making because they directly implicate administrative practice. Even though they may have substantial financial impact, expenditures resulting from them would not be easily discernable in a published budget. Table 1 lists each dependent variable and its contract language or budget proxy.

INSERT TABLE 1 ABOUT HERE

Collective bargaining agreements and district budgets obtained from a random sample of 92 districts stratified by size and approximately equally distributed among the three states comprised the data source. The

Table 1

Dependent Variables and Contract Language Proxy Measures

Duty Number and Description	Contract Language or Budget Allocation Proxy
1. Provide the revenue necessary to to operate and maintain schools	Ratio of negotiable expenditures to the total instructional budget
2. Adopt policy and enforce all rules for managing the schools	Number of times union participation in making decisions is required
3. Hire qualified teachers	Presence of probationary lane in salary schedule
4. Determine teachers' salaries	Ratio of highest salary divided by lowest
5. Prescribe what will be taught	Number of curriculum matters requiring union participation
6. Select textbooks	Required union participation in processes

(Table 1 Continued)

7. Determine the calendar	Presence or absence in master agreement
8. Provide equal education for all persons aged 3 through 21	Adjustment in class size required when students are "mainstreamed"
9. Set conditions for employment of administrators	Ratio of administrative salary budget to total instructional budget
10. Dismiss a teacher	Number of due process steps required to dismiss for cause
11. Suspend or expel a student	Language limiting the return of students with behavior problems to the classroom
12. Maintain school facilities	Ratio of maintenance budget to total instructional budget
13. Layoff unneeded employees	Relative complexity of required procedures

largest school district in each state (Chicago, Detroit, and Milwaukee) was not included in the random selection process in order to prevent distortions based on size alone. Table 2 displays the strata, the sample drawn and the rate of usable return for each state.

INSERT TABLE 2 ABOUT HERE

Data Analysis

Differences in legislative provisions and district size among the three states on the non-dichotomous variables were analyzed by one and two-way ANOVA. Modified Least Significant Differences procedures were used to test whether directional differences were statistically significant. Chi-Square tests were used to test the differences between the dichotomous variables. The .05 probability level was used to determine statistical significance. Table 3 displays each variable and the results of the corresponding

Table 2

Size Strata, Sample Drawn, and Usable Returns

		Illinois		Michigan		Wisconsin		Total		Per-
		Drwn.	Ret.	Drwn.	Ret.	Drwn.	Ret.	Drwn.	Ret.	cent
District	1 - 500	10	5	10	5	10	7	30	17	%57
Size	501-1000	10	6	10	6	10	7	30	19	%63
	1001-2500	10	5	10	9	10	7	30	21	%70
	2501-5000	10	6	10	6	10	7	30	19	%63
	5001-20,000	10	4	10	5	10	7	30	16	%53
		50	26	50	31	50	35	150	92	%61
	Percent		%52		%62		%70		%61	

statistical tests.

INSERT TABLE 3 ABOUT HERE

Discussion

The differing impact of the legislation was statistically significant and in the direction predicted for the following three duties: #1--provide revenue; #9--set conditions for employment of administrators; and #10--dismiss unsatisfactory employees. District size was found to have statistically significant variation in the direction predicted on the following five duties: #2--adopt policy and rules; #4--determine teachers' salaries; #8 provide equal education; #10--dismiss a teacher; and #13--lay off employees. Significant interaction between type of legislation and district size was found on four of the duties: #2--adopt policy and rules; #5--prescribe what will be taught; #9--set conditions for employment of administrators; and #10--dismiss a teacher. For type of legislation,

Table 3

Results of Statistical Tests

Dependent Variables (Proxy Measure)	Independent Variables: External Pressure	District Size	Interaction
1. Provide Revenue (Percent Instructional budget negotiated)	Sig. A*	N.S. B	N.S.
2. Adopt Policies (Required Union Contacts)	Sig. C	Sig. A	Sig.
3. Hire Qualified Teachers (Probationary Lane)	N/A	N/A	N/A
4. Set Teacher Salaries (Salary Schedule Top to Bottom Ratio	N.S. A	Sig. A	N.S.

(Table 3 Continued)

5. Prescribe what will be taught (Union Participation in Curriculum Decisions)	N.S. C	N.S. A	Sig.
6. Adopt Textbooks (Union Participation on Selection Committees	Sig. C	N.S. A	N/A
7. Determine Calendar (Bargained/Not Bargained)	N/A	N/A	N/A
8. Provide Equal Education (Special Education Placement Restrictions)	Sig. C	Sig. A	N/A
9. Set Conditions of of Administrator Employment (Percent of Budget Allocated to Administrator Salaries)	Sig. A	N.S. A	Sig.
10. Dismiss a Teacher (Required Steps)	Sig. A	Sig. A	Sig.

(Table 3 Continued)

11. Discipline Students (Limits on Return of Disrupters to Class)	Sig. C	Sig. B	N/A
12. Maintain Buildings And Grounds (Percent of Budget Allocated)	Sig. B	N.S. C	N.S.
13. Layoff Teachers (Restrictions in Contract Language)	Sig. C	Sig. A	N.S.

* A = In the direction predicted by the model
  B = In the general direction predicted by the model
  C = Reverse of the direction predicted by the model

the differences were statistically significant, but not in the direction hypothesized, on the following three duties: #2--adopt policy and rules; #6--determine textbooks; #7--provide equal education; and #11--suspend or dismiss a student; and #13--lay off employees. For district size, none of the statistically significant differences appeared out of the direction predicted. Economic Variables (Duties 1,4,9, and 12) Both teacher and board interest on economic matters is intense, though for opposite reasons. Among these duties, "provide revenue necessary to operate the schools" varied as predicted, but only the differences attributable to type of legislation were statistically significant. Something approaching a linear relationship on both type of legislation and district size occurred for this variable (See Figure 2);

INSERT FIGURE 2 ABOUT HERE

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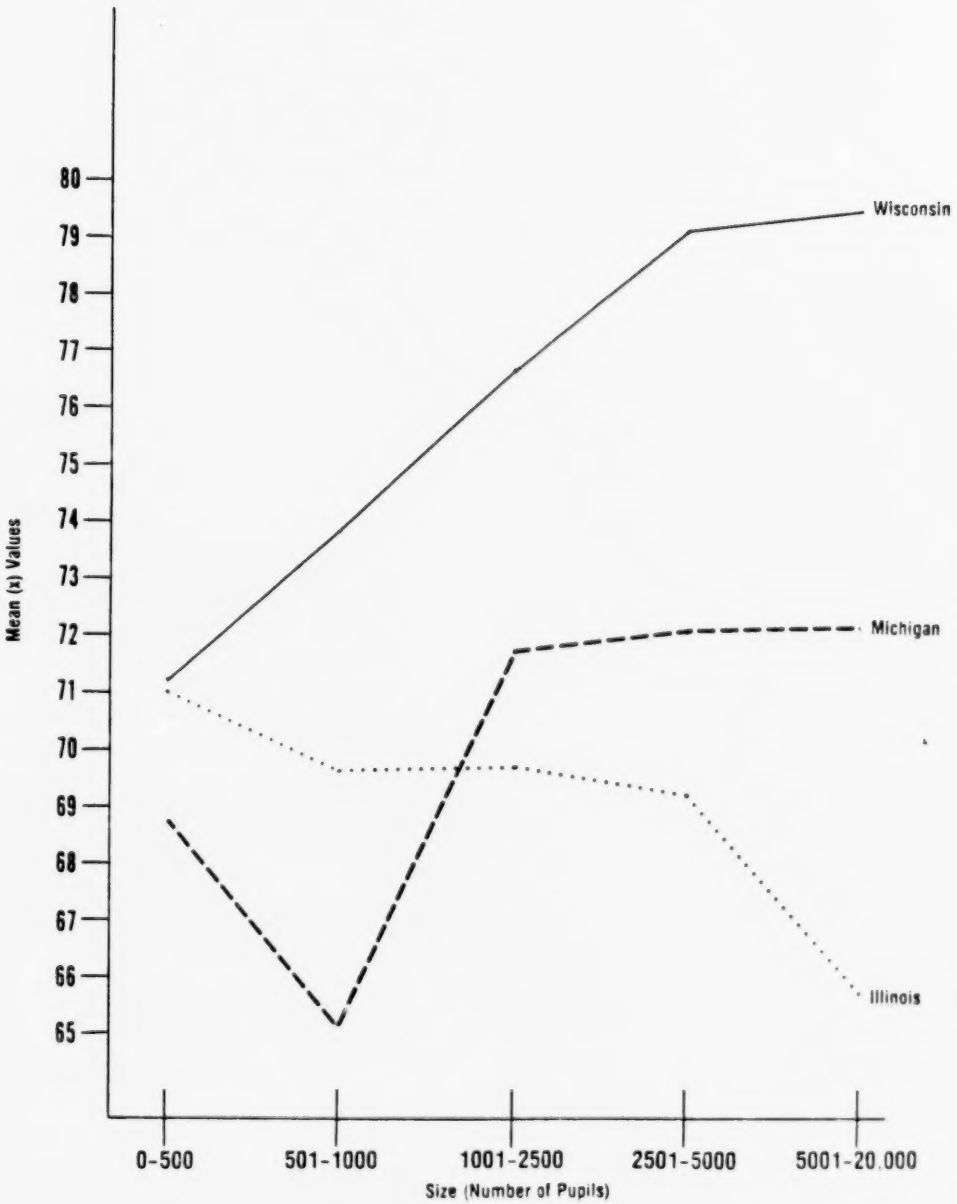
however, the interaction between Michigan and Illinois

Figure 2 –Duty #1

Negotiated Dollars as a Percent of
Instructional Budget for "Provide Revenue Necessary
To Operate and Maintain Schools"



accounted for approximately 33% of the variance, leaving it unclear what accounted for the remaining 67%.

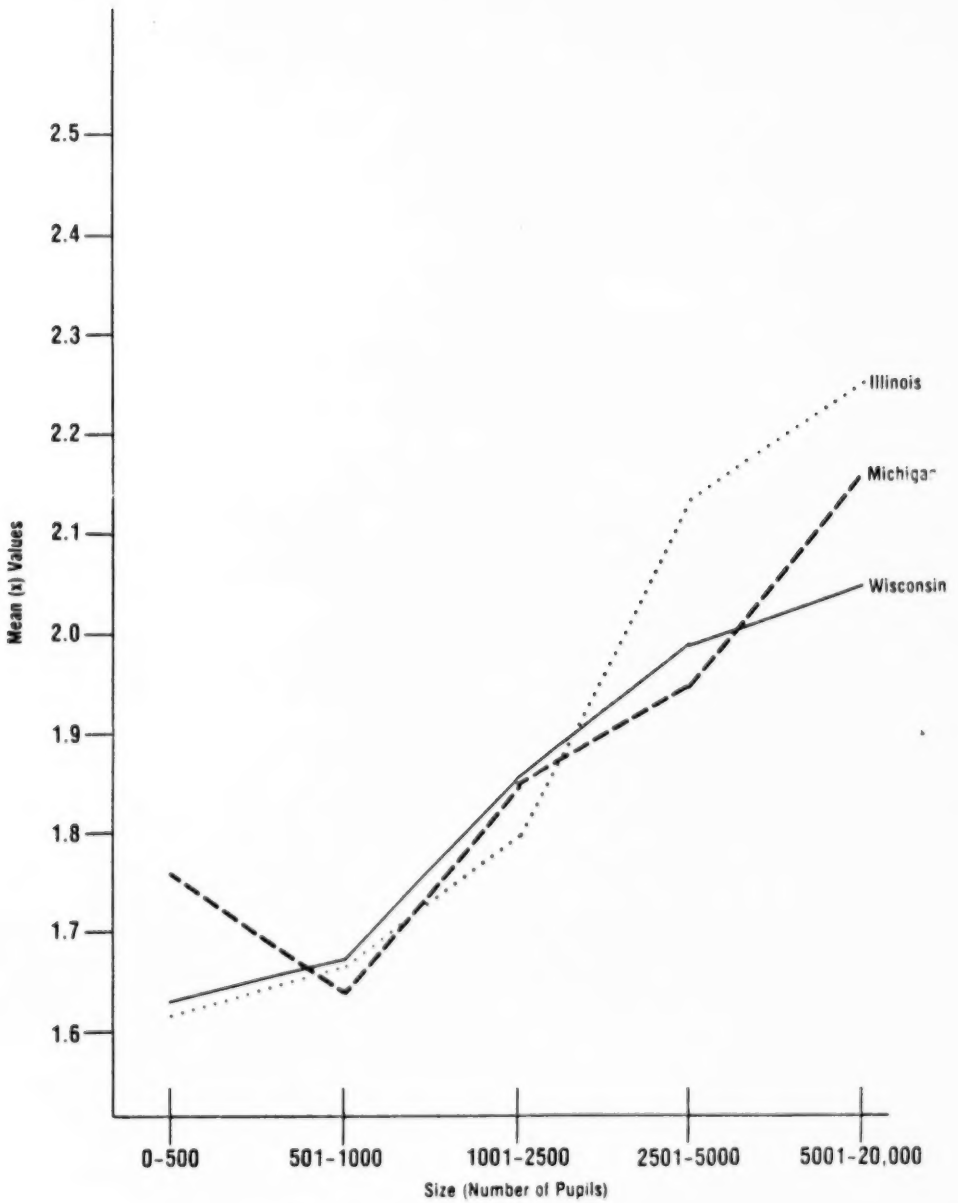
"Determining teachers' salaries," (Duty 4) is clearly more strongly related to size of district than differences in external pressure to avoid impasse (See Figure 3).

INSERT FIGURE 3 ABOUT HERE

Two thirds of the variance here was accounted for by district size, alone. These surprising results suggest that high external pressure at time of impasse in salary negotiations (defined as the availability of compulsory binding arbitration) does not, alone, result in high salary settlements. District wealth, local traditions, local bargaining unit strength or reluctance of arbitrators to go beyond their own intuitively derived regional standards may all play a larger role than the mere presence or absence of compulsory binding arbitration.

Figure 3—Duty #4

Ratio Value of Last Contract Step Divided by
First Contract Step for "Determine Teachers' Salaries"



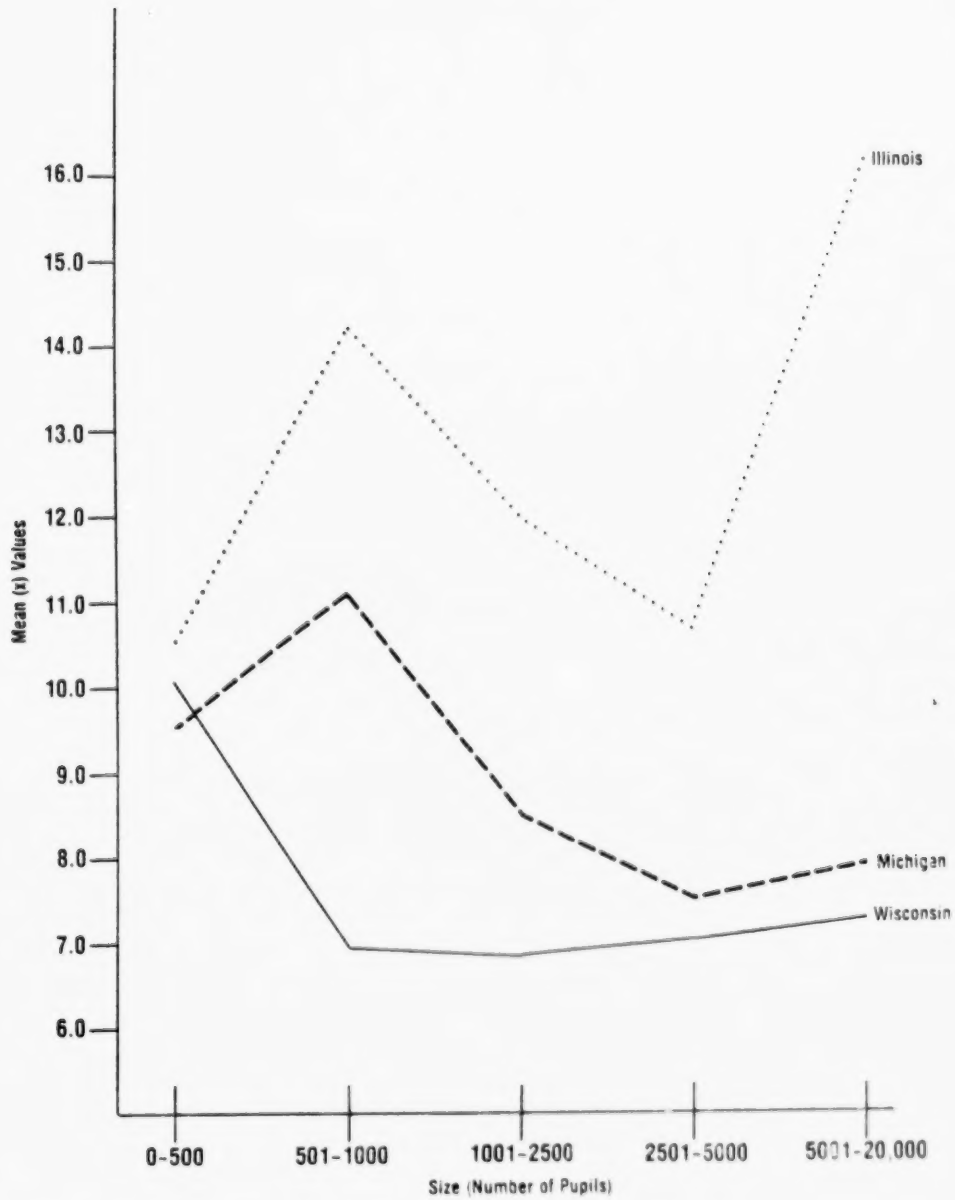
Differences among the states on a board's duty to "set the conditions of employment of administrators" (Duty 9) was statistically significant on type of legislation and very close to it on size (See Figure 4).

INSERT FIGURE 4 ABOUT HERE

These results indicate that setting administrator salaries, often viewed as the only vestige of traditional management prerogative remaining to school boards, is not immune to external influence. More than half of the variance among the states on this variable is accounted for by differences in legislation and district size. Even though the salaries paid teachers in the three states are comparable (See Figure 3), it is evident that districts in the state with the most external pressure to settle salary proposals do not have as much money left over after teacher settlements to pay their administrators as do districts in the other two states. If the lower administrator salaries in Wisconsin

Figure 4 —Duty #9

Administrative Costs as a Percent of Instructional Budget For "Set Administrative Employment Conditions"



are interpreted as indicating the state's comparative reluctance to spend money on education, then the fact that this reluctance does not also appear in teacher salaries may be attributable to the external pressure of the state's collective bargaining legislation.

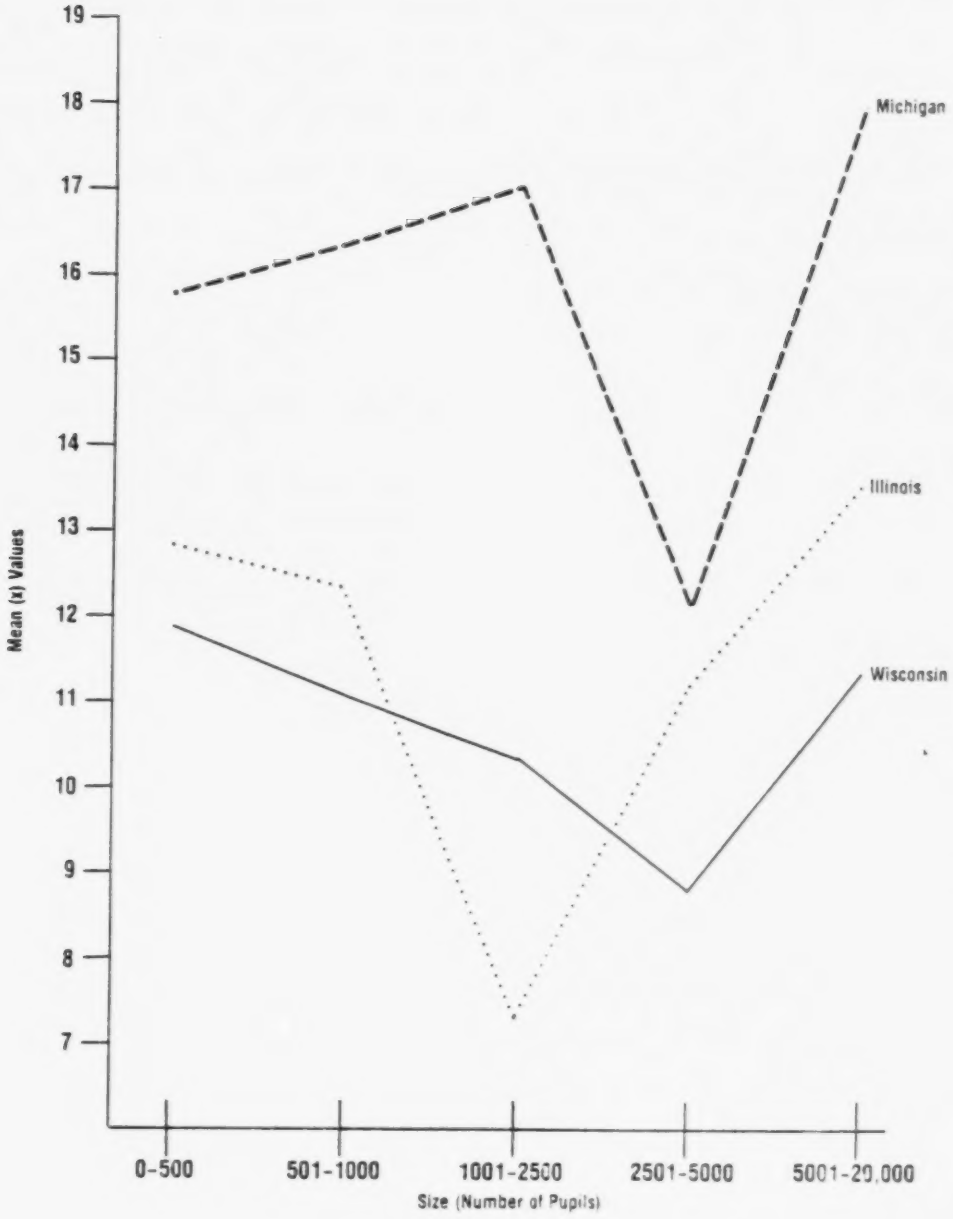
Differences on the ratio of total budget to expenditures for buildings and grounds varies significantly by type of legislation but not by size or interaction (See Figure 5)

INSERT FIGURE 5 ABOUT HERE

Modified L.S.D. analysis indicates that the mean value for Michigan (15.928) is significantly different from both the Illinois (11.398) and Wisconsin (10.703) means, but that the difference between Illinois and Wisconsin is not. Although the direction is not entirely as predicted, Wisconsin's low ratio would suggest that, much like administrator salaries, there may be little left over for this category once bargaining for salaries

Figure 5 –Duty #12

Maintenance Costs as a Percent of Instructional Budget for "Maintain School Buildings and Grounds"



in a climate of otherwise limited resources and strong external pressure to settle is completed. This is consistent with the data of duty 9; in each case, states with weak pressure to avoid impasse retain board discretion while those with strong pressure find that when bargaining is over, there may be little money left to spend on non-instructional activities.

Variables With No or Delayed Economic Impact Duties 2,3,5,6,7,8,10,11, and 13 are classified as non-economic variables even though several of them have substantial financial implications. However, since expenditures relating to them would not be locatible in a published budget, proxy measures for them were sought exclusively in contract language. Because of comparably strict legislative control and bargaining traditions in all three states, no differences were predicted for Duty 3, "ability to hire qualified teachers,' and Duty 7, "determine the calendar." Statistical tests for these predictions were, therefore, inappropriate. The raw data, nevertheless, suggest that, as predicted, there is little difference among the three states on these

variables.

Duty 2, "required management contact" with the labor organization in policy and rule making varied significantly by legislation, size and interaction, though not according to the hypothesized direction except for size. (See Figure 6)

INSERT FIGURE 6 ABOUT HERE

The significant interaction suggests that other unmeasured variables influenced this measure although size, alone, acts to compensate for such differences .

Only the interaction effect was significant for Duty 5, "prescribe what will be taught." (See Figure 7)

INSERT FIGURE 7 ABOUT HERE

Figure 6 —Duty #2

Number of Contractually Required Union Contacts
By School Boards for "Adopt Policy and Enforce All
Necessary Rules for the Management
and Governance of the Schools"

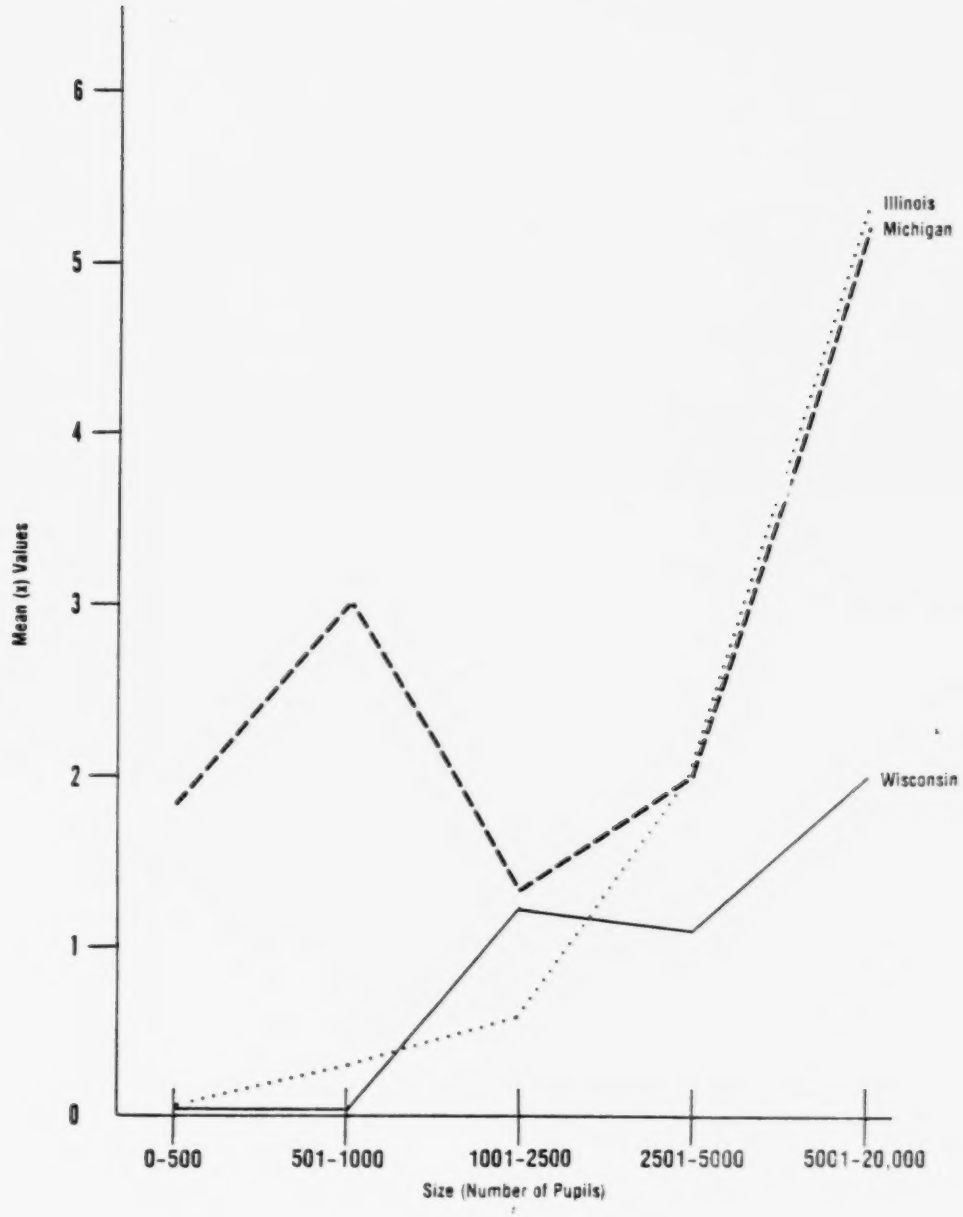
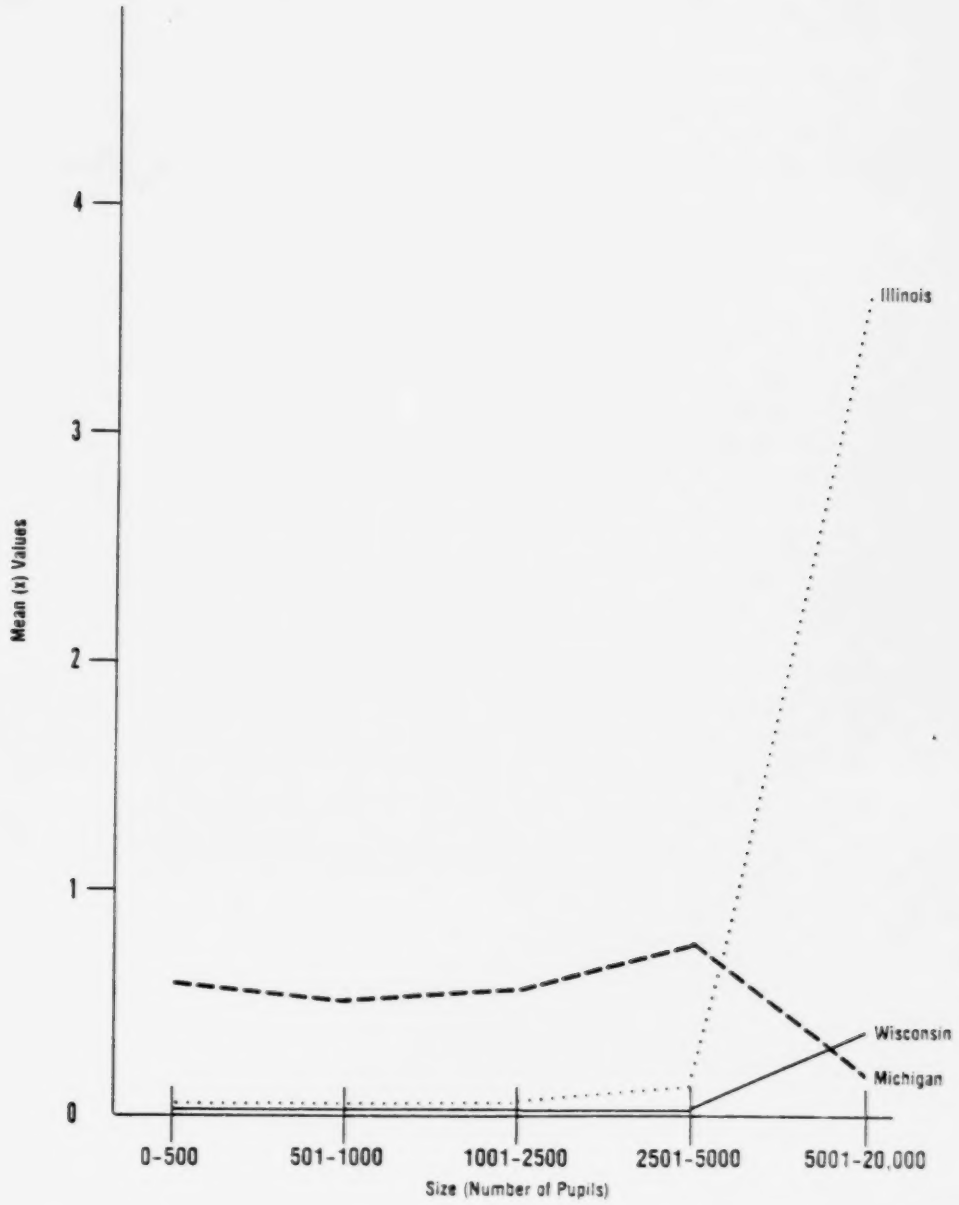


Figure 7 –Duty #5

Number of Contractually Established Union Positions
On School District Curriculum Committees For
"Prescribe What Will Be Taught"



Even though union participation in curriculum decisions is statistically the greatest in Illinois, this is not a generalized condition because the variance is accounted for by one outlying district. If the data from this one district are ignored, it becomes apparent that neither district size nor type of legislation has an impact on this variable. However on the conceptually similar, "select textbooks," (duty 6) the results were somewhat different for external pressure to settle (See Table 4).

INSERT TABLE 4 ABOUT HERE

Even though the difference is statistically significant, the raw data are not in the direction predicted by the model. Apparently, local traditions independent of impasse resolution procedures account for the variation. It is unclear why the data on the conceptually similar duties 5 and 6 differ. Perhaps the operational definition of duty 5 was over-restrictive and therefore insensitive to differences that would appear in contract

language.

A Chi-square distribution according to district size failed to generate statistically significant results on either duty 5 or duty 6..

Language provisions related to the obligation to provide equal education for all students varied significantly according to both legislation and size. Table 5 displays the results for external pressure to avoid impasse.

INSERT TABLE 5 ABOUT HERE

Again, the directionality suggested by the raw data does not comport with the hypotheses of the model.

For district size, variation was statistically significant and in the direction predicted. The Chi-square statistic for district size was 24.052, which, with four degrees of freedom is equivalent to a p. = 0.0001 (Table not included in order to conserve space.)

Table 4

Duty 6 "Select Textbooks"

Chi-square Distribution by External Pressure to Avoid Impasse

Pressure	no	yes	no data	%yes	N
Wisconsin (high)	35	0	0	0.00	35
Michigan (medium)	22	9	0	29.032	31
Illinois (low)	16	1	9	6.250	26
Total	73	10	9		92

= 13.843. with 2 df, p. = 0.001

Table 5

Duty 8 "Provide Equal Education"

Chi-square Distribution by External Pressure to Avoid Impasse

Pressure	no	yes	no data	%no	N
Wisconsin (high)	31	4	0	11.42	35
Michigan (medium)	15	16	0	51.61	31
Illinois (low)	15	2	9	11.76	26
Total	61	22	9		92

= 16.012, with 2 df, p. = 0.0003

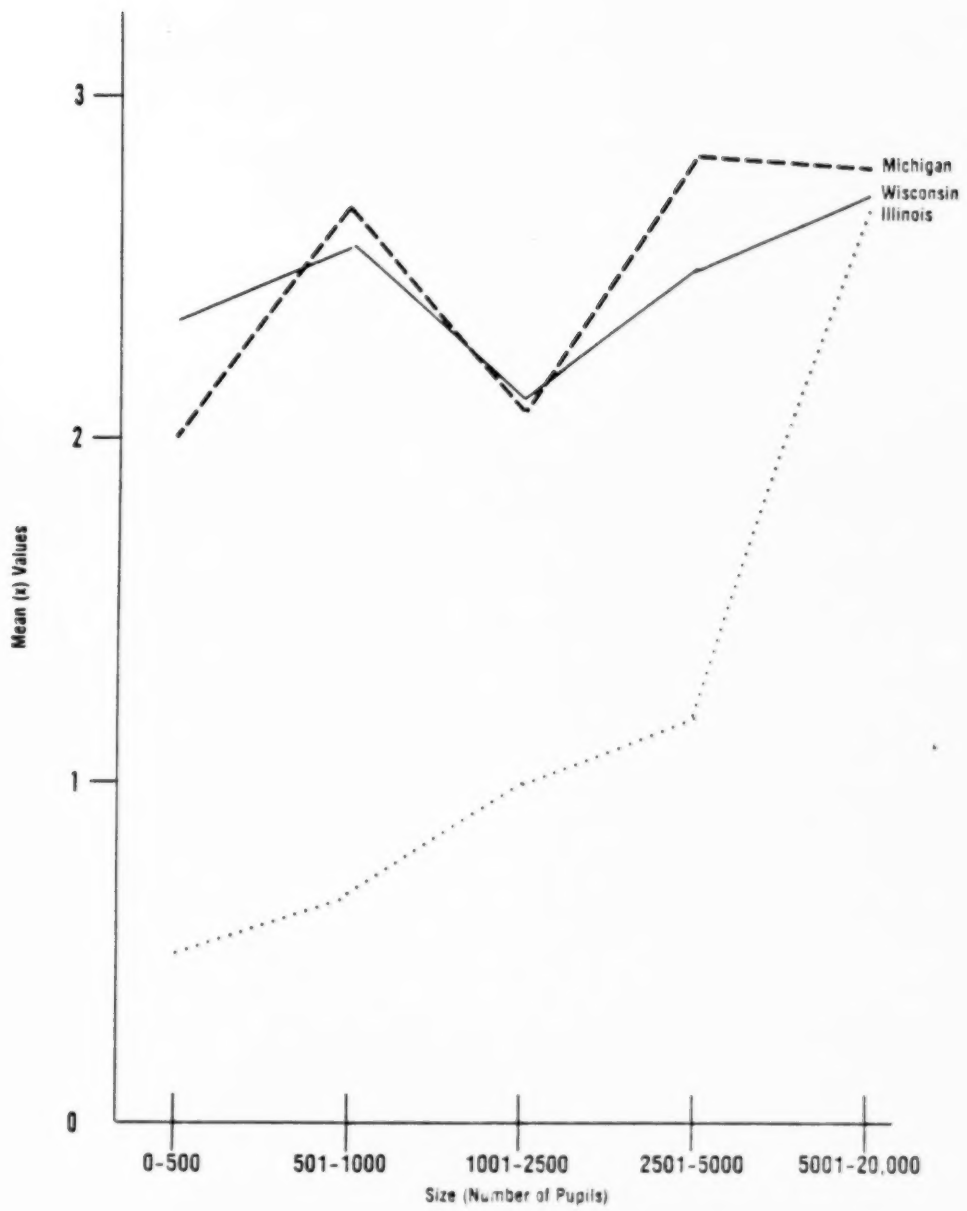
Relative restrictions on board's power to dismiss a teacher (Duty 10) partially reflected the model's predictions. The states with the most restrictive legislation (Wisconsin and Michigan) had the most limitations, and the state with the least restrictive legislation, the fewest (See Fig. 8).

INSERT FIGURE 8 ABOUT HERE

However, district size seems to be an equally, if not more important, factor. Both Michigan and Wisconsin have significantly higher mean values for restrictions than Illinois until the Fifth size category. At that point size makes up for legislative impact and brings the mean values of all three states into comparability. It seems safe to conclude that while the more restrictive bargaining laws may encourage unions to engage in old-fashioned hard bargaining on this matter, after district size reaches the fifth category, the number of employees rather than legislation seems to be

Figure 8 –Duty #10

Number of Contractual Criteria For
"Dismiss A Teacher"



the primary factor leading to agreements which restrict board discretion on it.

Teachers' attempts to control the board's handling of disruptive students, although surely moderated substantially by the federally protected property rights of students to attend school, varied significantly among the states according to both type of legislation and size, although not strictly as predicted. Table 6 displays the results for external pressure to avoid impasse.

INSERT TABLE 6 ABOUT HERE

It is evident that many more collective bargaining agreements in Michigan contain restrictions on board's dealings with students than in Illinois and Wisconsin. The reasons for this remain undetected.

The Chi-square statistic for size was 11.300 with 4 degrees of freedom. This yields a probability of 0.0024 (Table omitted in order to conserve space.)

Table 6

Duty 11 "Restrictions on Returning Disrupters to Class"

Chi-square Distribution by External Pressure to Avoid Impasse

Pressure	no	yes	no data	%yes	N
Wisconsin (high)	27	8	0	22.86	35
Michigan (medium)	4	27	0	87.10	31
Illinois (low)	15	3	8	11.54	26
Total	46	38	8		92

= 34.934, with 2 df, p. = 0.0001

For restrictions on Duty 13, "lay-off of unneeded employees," only size of district has a systematic impact (See Figure 9)

INSERT FIGURE 9 ABOUT HERE

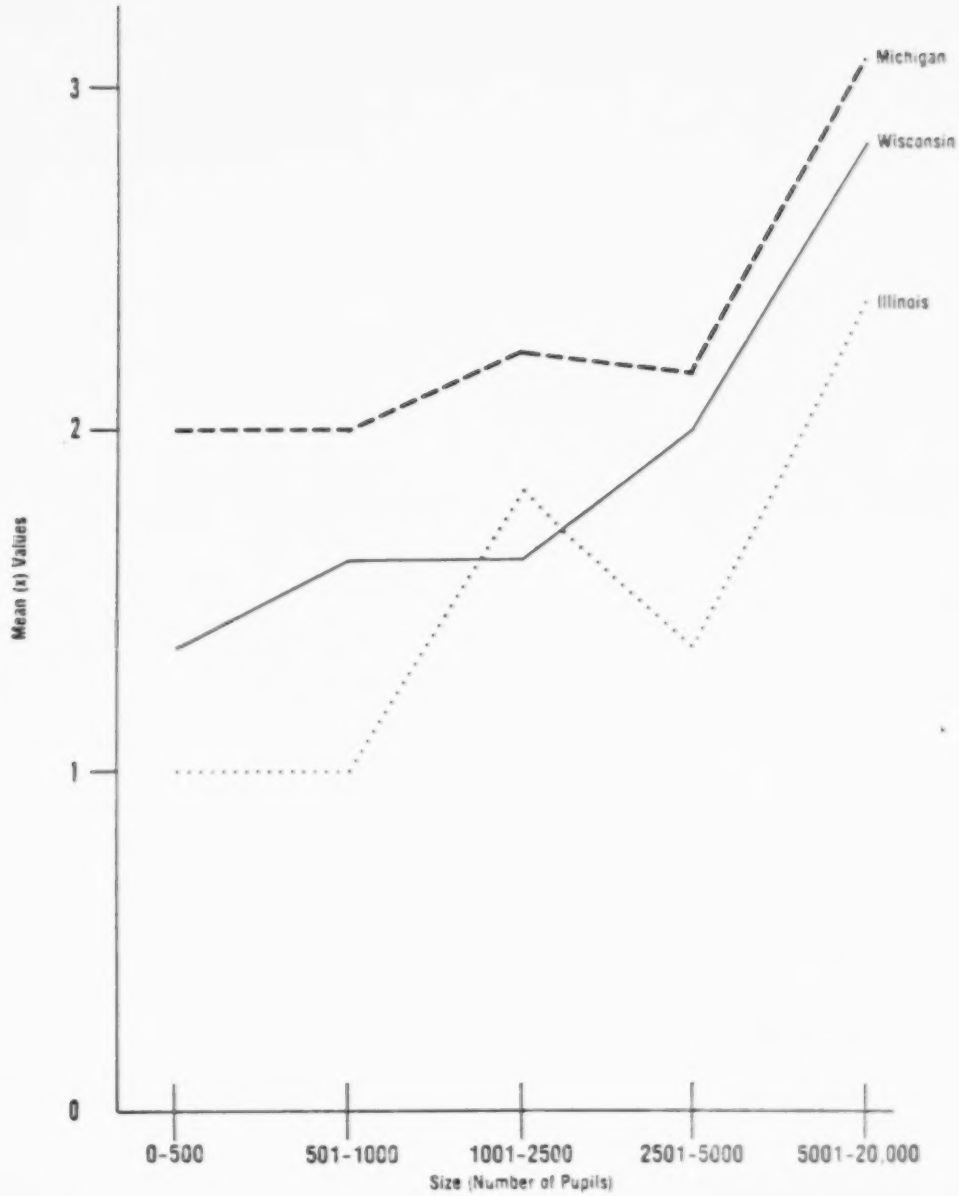
The results suggest an almost parallel increase by size category in each state, with Michigan having a value that is consistently significantly higher than either Wisconsin or Illinois. Inasmuch as this issue is of prime importance to labor organizations, external pressure to settle does not, alone, result in variation in the various states' provisions. Perhaps the consistent interest of the courts in all jurisdictions to insure justice in layoff procedures creates a separate external pressure for agreement on relatively uniform procedures, regardless of local provisions for resolution of impasse.

Conclusions

Variation in the intensity of external pressure to

Figure 9 —Dependent Variable #13

Board-Union Strength Category For
"Layoff Procedures"



avoid impasse was found to have significant impact in the direction predicted on school district budgets and collective bargaining language on three of the eleven dependent duties on which differences were predicted. Size impact was significant and in the direction predicted for five of them. If directionality apart from statistical significance is considered as a separate entity, however, four out of the eleven predictions based on type of legislation and eight out of the eleven based on district size were correct. Of the duties where the impact was statistically significant, ten out of fifteen (67%) were predicted correctly.

A number of things seem abundantly clear as a result of this research. First, the importance of district size as a variable to explain differences among collective bargaining agreements probably cannot be over-stated. Although it was statistically significant all by itself only once (Duty 4), it was significant along with type of legislation in six of eleven dependent variables, overall, four of which were non-economic. Thus, as district size increases, so also

do restrictions on boards' capability to carry out their duties unilaterally. Moreover, the data for Duties 1,4,8,10,11, and 12 all indicate the presence of some type of threshold effect of size. After district size approaches 5,000 or more students, it appears to dominate all other factors. Given current student/population ratios, this means that in communities of 25,000 or more, size has an impact on local bargaining that is independent of the bargaining envorinment created by external pressure to avoid impasse. In other words, size may be a proxy for urbanization, union power, community wealth, willingness to pay taxes, and many other socio-economic factors, all of which have greater impact on collective bargaining agreements than external pressure to avoid impasse.

The data also reveal that the topics of bargaining differ substantially among the three states. Apparently external pressure to settle as represented by compulsory binding arbitration is not sufficient to pique Wisconsin teachers' interest in (or, to provide them success in) bargaining for substantial participation in school board decision-making regarding curriculum or policies

regarding students. Certainly the "creeping control" theory of so-called mature bargaining as a function of time, alone, is to be questioned. Wisconsin's public sector bargaining history is the oldest among the three states, having been in place for 30 years, and compulsory binding arbitration at impasse has been in effect for ten. Nevertheless, unions there have made no substantial effort (or at least have had no substantial success at it) to bargain for participation in educational policy-making as represented by the non-economic variables of this study. Perhaps there is no theoretical cap or limit on union interest in wages, hours, or conditions of employment, especially in an economic environment characterized by inflation and employment insecurity. Perhaps arbitrators are not as comfortable with awarding power and policy-making proposals as they are with traditional wages, hours, and conditions of employment matters. The Wisconsin data, especially, suggest that the strong external pressure of compulsory binding arbitration does, indeed, reduce local boards' prerogatives in establishing their budgets. Teacher salaries (the prime interest of

collective bargaining units) there have kept pace with those in neighboring states, but other expenditures (administrator salaries and facilities costs) have not.

Though the state-by-state legislative provisions model needs refinement, it appears to have potential value for evaluating the outcomes of collective bargaining laws. It strength is relative simplicity and relative ease of data acquisition (published collective bargaining agreements, district budgets, and demographic compilations). Whatever else may be concluded from this research it substantially challenges the perceptions of school board members that collective bargaining in general and third party arbitration in particular has seriously eroded their capability to perform their legislatively mandated duties. Only seven of the twelve comparable variables studied by Smitt (1982), who reported board members' perceptions of collective bargaining's negative impact, were verified by the budget and contract language measures of this study. On the other hand, this study reveals that collective bargaining and third-party resolution of impasse may, indeed, result in school boards spending considerably

more money on employee salaries than might otherwise occur. By way of their defense (one of the co-authors is a board member) however, it must be noted that there is no effective method by which school board members can remain informed on the actual impact of collective bargaining agreements on the day to day operation of schools in their district, let alone the entire state. Consequently, no criticism of board members is implied. The note is made primarily for researchers, who should not give much credence to board members' perceptions, or union members', for that matter, when attempting to assess the impact of collective bargaining legislation. The relative opinions of the direct participants appear to have little relationship to collective bargaining's actual costs and real outcomes on education in local school districts, whether for good or for ill.

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